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## Saguaro National Park News Release

*For Immediate Release*

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### **NATURALIZATION CEREMONY HELD AT SAGUARO NATIONAL PARK** *Embrace Citizenship – Experience America Through Your National Parks*

**Tucson, AZ** – Twenty-one candidates were sworn in as new United States citizens by Honorable District Court Judge Jennifer Zipps today during a ceremony held in Saguaro National Park. These new citizens represented 11 different countries, including Canada, Columbia, India, Ireland, Libya, Mexico, Philippines, Russia, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago. Saguaro held this naturalization in partnership with the National Park Service and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

“Our nation’s birthday is such a fitting and deeply patriotic day to become a new United States citizen,” said Darla Sidles, Saguaro’s Superintendent. “Saguaro National Park is honored and humbled to host this ceremony.”

“I can’t think of places more appropriate to welcome a new generation of American citizens than national parks,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis in a previous statement. “These parks, which are owned by all Americans, are not only places of stunning natural beauty and abundant wildlife, but across this country national parks preserve our nation’s fascinating history and protect our rich cultural heritage. From the Aztec Ruins National Monument in New Mexico to Ellis Island in New York City, national parks ensure our nation’s artifacts and records are protected for generations to come.”

The National Park Service and USCIS have a formal partnership enhancing citizenship ceremonies by holding them in national parks throughout the country. The agreement helps introduce new citizens to some of the nation’s most significant natural resources and cultural heritage sites. These historic and picturesque sites provide an ideal backdrop for citizenship ceremonies, where new citizens can learn about and reflect on American identity and the responsibilities of citizenship.

Today’s Naturalization Ceremony was the first in over 15 years to be held in this region on Independence Day, according to Judge Zipps. Saguaro National Park is planning to make July 4<sup>th</sup> Naturalization Ceremonies an annual park tradition with the support and cooperation of USCIS.

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#### **EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA**

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.